

The inclusiveness of the environmental aspect in the Index proven to be one of the strongest commitments of Malaysian Muslim religious scholars (ulama-ulama) to drive EEB of not only at the mass Muslims level but also at the decision makers' level in Malaysia as far as the environment is concern. Malaysia Shariah Index Unit was established under Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) responsible for the implementation of the Index (JAKIM, 2017). The Malaysia first Syariah Index (ISM) 2015 report stated the score for infrastructure and environment at 62.31% (The Sunday Daily, 2016). The score for infrastructure and environment was improved to 72.89% in 2017 (New Straits Times, 2017).

In Malaysia Muslim religious scholars like Azizan Baharuddin is also actively advocating EEB. In April 14, 2017 Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), where Azizan Baharuddin is the Director-General, has published a book entitled *IKIM & Alam Sekitar: 25 Tahun Menghijau Minda* (English: *IKIM and the Environment: 25 Years of Greening the Minds*). The book is about the contribution of IKIM in providing Islamic understanding and awareness to the public on aspects of environmental protection and conservation. It was published in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of IKIM's establishment in 2017. This book documents all IKIM's activities and engagements in fighting environmental issues from 1992 to 2016 in an effort to provide Islamic understanding to all levels of society (IKIM, 2017; Azian Sobian, 2012).

Additionally, on February 20-21, 2018 IKIM will be conducting a seminar on Maqasid Sharia and Climate Change featuring speakers among Muslim religious scholars such as S. Ahmad Iskandar S. Ariffin who is the Coordinator of Malaysia Shariah Index Core Infrastructure and Environment and will be speaking on the Shariah Index; Azizan Baharuddin herself who will be speaking on Islamic Declaration on Climate Change; and Mohd Istajib Mokhtar who will be speaking on Environmental Conservation in the Framework of Maqasid al-Shariah (IKIM, 2017).

IKIM also established a Centre for Science and Environmental Studies dedicated to research into seven research concentrations, i.e., theory and sociology of knowledge; history and philosophy of science; science, values and ethics; science education; health sciences, future studies; and including the environment. This Centre has its own qualified officers who are also researchers in the seven research areas and committed in conducting research and publications (IKIM, 2017).

The staffs of IKIM frequent the media such as *Sinar Harian*, *The Star*, and *Utusan Malaysia* with articles on environmental issues in relation to Islamic teachings. Among the focus of their articles in the media are on environmental protection via Islamic teachings, the relationship between iman and protection of the environment, human as a caliph (trustee) on earth, Islamic bioethics, illegal logging, moderation and consumption, sustainable consumption, environmental degradation, sustainability issues, eco-green, wastage behavior, and biodiversity and future generation, floods, environmental education, environmentally friendly Eids, and Muslim religious community and environmental protection, sustainability and livelihood, environmental sustainability and

civilization, environmental disaster and Islamic teachings, environmental heritage, recycling, green technology, and sustainable biodiversity (IKIM, 2017). IKIM also has its own radio and television channels, IKIMfm and tvIKIM, respectively. IKIMfm and tvIKIM are regularly aired environmental issues in relation to Islam in the form of talks, programs and campaigns.

Like Azizan Baharuddin other Muslim religious scholars contribute to driving the EEB among Muslims in Malaysia within their own capacity. Zakaria Stapa, for instance, as a Muslim academic scholar and a researcher in the field of Islamic studies specializing in *usuluddin* and philosophy as well as a committee member of National Fatwa Council of Malaysia and incumbent of Syeikh Abdullah Fahim Chair at Institute of Islam Hadhari UKM leads a research group in developing a framework of environmental *fiqh* focusing on solid waste as urged by Azian Sobian (2012). Zakaria Stapa and the other four researchers from other fields of expertise, i.e., Hassan Basri of civil and structural engineering, Mashitoh Yaacob of environmental philosophy, Muhammad Hakimi Mohd Shafiai of economic studies and Mohd Izhar Ariff Mohd Kashim of *shariah*, combined their efforts and expertise on driving the EEB of Muslims in Malaysia through the research on and publication of environmental *fiqh* framework. The research group identifies and determines the principles of *aqidah*, *usul fiqh* and *maqasid shariah* to develop the environmental *fiqh* framework. The outcome of the research is the framework of environmental *fiqh* in a form of a book tentatively entitled 'Environmental *Fiqh*: Solid Waste' to be published in 2018. The group is promoting for the environmental *fiqh* framework which will be produced in the form of a book to be used by Islamic religious authority and other relevant stakeholders to mobilize EEB among Muslims in Malaysia.

Additionally, one of the group members, Mohd Izhar Ariff Mohd Kashim, who is active in the media particularly on television and radio channels as well as public forums in mosques and religious centers (*surau*) giving talks regarding issues on contemporary *fiqh*, has also used his public influence in promoting EEB such as in 2012 he joined as a panel in a program called 'Asked An Ustaz@Surau An-Nur' speaking on environmental resources in relation with Islamic teachings organized by ALAM Club of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (Wikipedia, 2017).

Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) being one of the Islamic religious authorities in Malaysia is not shy away from contributing its efforts in driving EEB of Muslims in Malaysia. JAKIM has produced *khutbah* texts on the environmental protection for Friday congregational prayer around the country. For instance, in October 25, 2013, JAKIM produced a *khutbah* text entitled 'Environmental Protection is A Shared Responsibility' in conjunction with Malaysia Environment Week calling for EEB among Muslims particularly on being moderate in consumption of natural resources (JAKIM, 2013). In 2016, the *khutbah* entitled 'Appreciate Oneself by Appreciating the Environment' relating acts of oneself and environmental protection and wellbeing with Quranic verses and *Sunnah* (JAKIM, 2016). In the same year, in conjunction

with National Environment Day on October 21, JAKIM also produced JAKIM Multimedia *Khutbah* entitled ‘Collective Responsibility of Preserving the Environment’ in three text versions, i.e., Roman, Jawi and PowerPoint, to promote EEB.

*Khutbah* texts on the environment are also produced by Islamic religious authorities at the State level. For example, on June 13, 2014 Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Negeri Sabah (JHEAINS) produced *khutbah* text entitled ‘Cultivating Awareness of Preserving and Conserving the Environment’ calling Muslims to perform EEB specifically on solid waste disposal and greening the land by planting trees (JHEAINS, 2014). The following year JHEAINS produced another *khutbah* text entitled ‘Together in Making the Environment Clean, Beautiful and Safe’ particularly in performing 3R, i.e., reduce, reuse and recycle (JHEAINS, 2015). The Mufti Department of Pahang (one of the States in Malaysia) has produced a second special *khutbah* on environment, in conjunction with National Environment Day on October 21, 2017, calling for Muslims to perform EEB (Mufti Department of Pahang, 2017).

Al-Hasanah Mosque in Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia uses biodegradable food and drink containers for participants in programs organized by the Mosque and other organizers at the Mosque. The Mosque makes it explicit for the caterers to use biodegradable food and drink containers and to manage the waste properly (Jannatun Naimah Binti Mokhni et al, 2017).

The Mosque also observes that the use of air conditioner and fan are on a need basis to save electric energy consumption, i.e., a few and not all air conditioners are on during prayers as well as the air conditioners were on at half an hour before prayers time not an hour before prayers as the Mosque found that at half an hour of turning on the air conditioners is sufficient to cool down the air temperature surrounding the prayer’s area. This EEB by the Mosque’s authority has reduced the electricity bill significantly. Additionally, the Mosque uses a heavy duty vacuum cleaner to clean the carpets in the Mosque. This type of vacuum cleaner consumes less electric energy (Jannatun Naimah Binti Mokhni et al, 2017).

Moreover, the Mosque acts as a drive through center for used cooking oil collection in the local area. This program is to educate the public on used oil recycling activity particularly in the State of Selangor (Azian Sobian, 2012). Before the commencement of the program, the Mosque has conducted an awareness program or a briefing to the public on the impact of direct used oil disposal into drains and rivers. The used cooking oil is deposited mostly by food stall’s owners and people who just held a big feast. The used cooking oil is transported to Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) once a week to be recycled and turned into biodiesel oil and engine oil. The money from the selling of the used cooking oil is spent for the Mosque’s activities. Other EEB activities conducted by the Mosque are clean-up program with the local community members as well as with volunteer groups, nongovernmental organizations and students from higher learning institutions. The Mosque has dedicated an area for growing vegetables and herbs in order to green the area

within the Mosque's compound and allowed the local people to pick them should they wish. The Mosque welcomes donations of plants from the public (Jannatun Naimah Binti Mokhni et al, 2017).

Another Mosque, al-Munawwarah Mosque located in Kangar Perlis, has asked the electric company Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB) to put on a device to reduce electric energy consumption at the Mosque. Although the cost for putting up the device is expensive the Mosque is committed to safe electric energy consumption up to 50 percent of usage (Sinar Online, 2014).

Although there is no Islamic religious based environmental movement in Malaysia but among 1146 Islamic religious based organizations in Malaysia there are those that focus their activities on the environmental preservation and conservation. For example, Pertubuhan Ikram Malaysia (IKRAM) which, founded in 2009, has put sustainable development as its vision in order to translate Islamic teachings into actions (W. Syairah Hazwani W. Petera, 2016). In 2014, IKRAM established its policy on the environment, i.e., Polisi Hijau dan Rendah Karbon IKRAM (English: IKRAM's Green Policy and Low Carbon) (IKRAM, 2015).

The Policy has outlined seven items to be carried out by IKRAM individual members, IKRAM offices around Malaysia as well as during IKRAM's activities. The items are: (1) Every member of IKRAM as an individual should be able to practice the practice of green and low carbon lifestyle in their daily lives, in line with Islamic law; (2) Every activity undertaken by IKRAM or any institution and agency under IKRAM should consider and pay attention to environmental care measures starting from its planning stage, reducing waste, using reused materials and recycling waste; (3) Take practical steps to reduce the use of non-environmentally friendly materials such as plastics, polystyrene and others in all activities organized by IKRAM as well as in every operation of the IKRAM office, IKRAM institutions and IKRAM's related agencies. Each office holds a waste separation program for recycling purposes by providing separate residual bins; (4) To operate with green purchasing policy in every IKRAM office, IKRAM institutions and IKRAM-related agencies by giving priority to the acquisition of more eco-friendly goods; (5) Adopting the principle of saving energy, water and other resources in every IKRAM office operation and IKRAM institution. The use of electric bulbs and equipment with energy-saving features, putting air-conditioning temperature at temperatures of not less than 24 degrees Celsius and designing staff placement to maximize the use of natural light is one of the necessary practices; (6) Always distribute and deliver environmental and hygiene messages to attendees in every activity organized by IKRAM by reminding the attendees that preserving and safeguarding the environment and its components, is an obligation that is classified as an *ibadah* (worship) that is required by *syarak* (the Islamic law); and (7) Provides a module on topics of care and concern for the environment by emphasizing on the individual role, in the *tarbiyah* syllabus in the MUSLEH schools network and also in IKRAM's media (IKRAM, 2015).

Another organization, Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) has put forward environmental protection as one of its agendas by establishing *Pertubuhan Alam Sekitar Sejahtera Malaysia* (English: Malaysian Association of Environmental Wellbeing), also known as GRASS Malaysia, in September 22, 2014 to meet the agenda known as Islamic Environmental Agenda. GRASS Malaysia is an evidence of ABIM's seriousness in educating the younger generation and society to champion environmental issues in Malaysia and globally, in line with al-Quran and Sunnah. GRASS Malaysia is responsible in conducting trainings and activities on sustainable livelihood in tune with Islamic requirements. One of such activities organized by ABIM and GRASS Malaysia is Dialogue on Environmental Issues: Discover Ideas on Universe and Religion on December 14, 2017. The group members are aware that as a caliph they are entrusted to uphold justice to all includes the environment, animals and plants (ABIM, 2017a).

ABIM is not new with its environmental agenda. In 1991, ABIM has established ABIM Environment Council (MASA) led by Zaini Ujang. Other notable environmental activists or Islamic environmentalists and scholars from ABIM are Osman Bakar, Zaini Hamzah, Kamal Ali, Zaini Ujang. In 2012 ABIM established environmental group called *Grup Alam Sekitar (GAS)* which in 2014 was re-established as GRASS Malaysia. ABIM is dedicated in interpreting Quranic verses on the environment to be integrated into Muslim practice in their daily lives. Additionally, ABIM emphasizes on the role of Muslims as a caliph on earth hence have to strive to preserve, protect and be responsible on all the natural resources Allah has provided besides living a sustainable lifestyle as prescribed in al-Quran and in the perspective of Islamic civilization development where the relationship between human and the natural environment is one of the main principles besides the relationships between human and Allah and human and human (ABIM, 2014).

ABIM (2017b) is also active with programs for environmental protection within ABIM itself such as a book talk program by GRASS Malaysia activist Yusaimi Yusof on February 13, 2017 discussing a book entitled 'The Challenge for Africa' at ABIM's Secretariat Office in Gombak. The discussions centered on ecological equilibrium and agriculture and the use of chemical fertilizers and herbicides, hunting-related tourism in Africa. ABIM and GRASS Malaysia also produced a video on the environment entitled 'Adaptation of Cultural Values and Religion in the Environment' to encourage the enculturation of EEB (ABIM 2017c). ABIM's environmental outreach programs to the public was also reported by local newspapers such as *Utusan Malaysia*, i.e., on February 3, 2011 the newspaper reported that ABIM, with the Department of Environment Batu Pahat and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) as well as Batu Pahat Single Mother Association (BP Care) and a group of 50 youths, have organized a clean-up program along *Minyak Beku* beach at *Sialu Island Batu Pahat* in the State of Johor. Water bodies in the area were polluted with pig farm industrial wastes, rubbish such as plastics and polystyrene. The volunteers aim at turning the area into a tourist attraction area to sustain the cleanliness of the area.

Previous studies found that religious figures and religious institutions or authorities provide a general concern towards the environment (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Mashitoh Yaacob, 2009). However, a careful study on the efforts of Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations in Malaysia on driving Muslims' EEB in the recent years has found that they have provided a range of concern towards the environment from generic to specific where appropriate. Specific concerns are found in a number of efforts made by Muslim Islamic scholars and Islamic religious organizations studied even in the *khutbah* texts.

The Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations are now gradually make explicit their roles in driving EEB of Muslims and the public at large in Malaysia in accordance with the teachings of Islam on the environment discussed at length by Ibrahim Abdul-Matin (2010) in his book 'Green Deen, What Islam Teaches About Protecting the Planet' where he draws on research, scripture, and interviews with Muslim Americans to trace Islam's concern with human role as a caliph on earth and offers many examples of how Muslims can follow, and what Muslims are already following such as in terms of waste (Al-Quran, 17:29), water (Al-Quran, 21:30), and food (Al-Quran, 7:31).

### **Conclusion**

The result of the analysis and synthesis of the relevant documents illustrates that Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations drive Muslims' EEB through diverse methods within their individual and organizational scope and autonomy such as via *khutbah* or sermons during Friday congregational prayer, public speeches, forum in the media, and activities of religious-based nongovernmental organizations. This finding may shed light on the level of involvement of Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations in driving Muslims' EEB in Malaysia.

The Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations do not even have to re-focus Islamic teachings in ecologically-alert terms as Islamic teachings on the environment are abundant in al-Quran and Sunnah. However, they are the ones who are capable of re-interpreting and translating as well as influencing the teachings of the Islamic religious traditions on the environment into the practice of Muslims in their daily routine. Hence, it is concluded that Muslim religious activists and scholars, and Islamic religious organizations in Malaysia do respond to the environmental challenge within the context of industrial development in Malaysia although unnoticed by most Muslims in Malaysia and varies in terms of the range of their environmental concerns, i.e., some of them provided a generic concern and the others are providing specific concern towards the environment but most of them provided both generic and specific concerns towards the environment where appropriate.

However, the fact that their efforts are unnoticed by Muslims at large in Malaysia is an indicator that they are yet to successfully driving the EEB into the majority Muslims in Malaysia. The rate

of their success in driving EEB among Muslims in Malaysia is probably yet to be celebrated (Mashitoh Yaacob et al, 2017). Perhaps future studies could explore on the success rate of the works of Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations in driving the EEB among Muslims in Malaysia. The Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations are similar in their environmental value orientation but vary in their approaches in addressing and solving the environmental challenges. The root problem of environmental challenge is 'greed' hence the more the Muslim religious scholars and Islamic religious organizations focus on developing comprehensive Islamic environmental *akhlaq* to stop 'desires' or 'wants' from feeding the feeling of 'greed' the lesser the environmental problems.

Perhaps, it is about time for more partnerships between religious leaders, ethicists, researchers and practitioners from other disciplines and sectors, Institute Islam Hadhari and other institutions working together to implement policies and practices aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the environment for current and future generations. Institute of Islam Hadhari is the best platform in realizing such partnership and people of all beliefs can appreciate the contributions that Islam and Muslims bring to the environmental movement.

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